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HARP OF THE  
HUMAN

*By John Collier*







# HARP OF THE HUMAN

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BY JOHN COLLIER  
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“A FLOWER IS STRONGER THAN THE WINDS THAT  
WORK THEIR WILL  
OR THE YEARS THAT WING THEIR WAY THROUGH  
DARKNESS TOWARD THEIR AIM.”



## To D. W.

(Died, 1906)

OLD VALLEYTOWN: 1913

*The mountains brood around.*

*There is no hollow or scarp of those vast and lonely ranges,  
that is not older than the human race.*

*You, who in life were visibly one with timeless energy,  
who were the triumphal will of Life, are gone. Your  
memory is a flower of loveliness, revealed in lightning or  
seen as bowed and lashed by thunder-rain, when at sunset  
the last rays fall on the lilies of that garden where  
you are remembered.*

*Your moment, though gone already into silence and shadow,  
is not at war with these long ages which wrought in  
fire these hills, and carved them with the water of a  
million years. Though all the oceans of the world have  
poured through Junaluska a thousand thousand times,  
your passage is not as a leaf that floats and is gone.  
There is no separation between your frailty and this  
power of giant time, nor between your defeat and the  
victory or defeat of that labor wherein is eternity unfolded.  
Nor does your incandescence of personal soul  
fall chill or waver, now while on these mountains rains  
the invisible light from suns grown dark long ago, in  
universes beyond the Milky Way.*

*Your last word with a friend was an impassioned nega-  
tion of the possibility of eternity for the human soul.  
Yet in your eyes then and there, amid seeming wreck  
and gloom, the light of an achieved immortality flamed;  
in your wonderful heart the secular illusion was already  
a mist made translucent by the sun; in your voice was  
the supernal cry of that cosmic miracle.*

*The Thought, that mysteriously does the will of Eternity  
in ways of Time; the Yearning, deflected out of all skies,*

backward toward the human race; the Reality, indwelling in thirst and power and form, the irreducible reality of experience: these are founded in deeps where your will labors yet. With the dead, they say, movement and change have an end; and sweet is the thought of overwearied dust grown still, of silence grown as an unapproachable fountain, near at hand and waiting for all. But sweeter it is, and more true by all tests than any truth beside, that the reachable world is like a Leyden jar, where luminous power unseen, with rythm fleeter than thought yet stately as the movement of worlds, has its ebb and flow perpetually, out of the dark, glorified, all-conserving abysm. In that abysm, O Friend, it is not that your personal soul is conserved. It conserves, our personal soul, yours and ours; and on our way it lies to prove and to know, that souls are indeed *The Conserving Abysm*.

Tonight only the stars illumine the far-pointed hemlocks, the dwelling so pure and fair and glad which seems an Athenian tomb. The far immeasurable starlight limns the mountains. You are here, but not only here. And this hand that writes is yours, but not yours alone. The mystery of interpenetrating lives and times and worlds, of the divine infinite paradox, of mutual love that outlives the grave—it is your flower, this mystery, seen in lightning, in sundown and by the stars, in a garden which you remember.





## HARP OF THE HUMAN

O HARP of Unnumber'd Strings, Harp of the  
Human!

All, all our music is less than thine undertone.  
Yearning thou art with but symbol in star or woman,  
Pathos in eyes that weep never, being alone.

Thou art hung within vagueness and dream, within lone  
desire

In an ancient land, O Harp of Forgotten Strings:  
Deep in unmemoried halls, a remembering Lyre;  
Faint, in Arcadian estrays, a Reed that sings.

Far in the laboring breast, far on the verges

Of the inward world, from our passionate quest apart,  
Unknown of our hands whom the earth-war marshalls  
and urges—

Does thy vigil grow weary, O Harp of the Exiled  
Heart?

Harp of the Human! not ever thus hast thou waited,  
Not always hung dumb while no hand of the mortal  
strove

On thy mystic strings with compassion and love o'er-  
freighted.

There are far-off years where they tell how a con-  
quering Love,

No glow on the night, no voice past a phantom portal,  
But a very Hand from beyond the veil and the deep,  
Was laid on thy hungering chords, O Harp of the Mortal,  
And its promise imbues thee still in our dreams of  
sleep.

Harp of the Gloaming! toward thee the symbols cluster  
And thy moan is heard amongst legends and dreams  
of old,  
Till we know not if only in timeless and pensive lustre  
Of the Academe, of Nazareth, thine hidden wonder  
is told—

If the Rose of the World, Lily of the Infinite Grail,  
Galahads and Deirdres, stars of the ideal sea,  
And the child at play in our door-yard's wistful pale,  
The enshrin'd, the unconscious, alone have knowl-  
edge of thee!

Harp of the Human! Long has the chord of an hour,  
Play'd by strong hands lit with the light of day,  
Sung through a world of deed and command and power;  
But ah, thy more shadowy strings, how they yearn  
to play!

Oh Harp! On war-ways we march to the strident  
thunder  
Of impelling tones pour'd from thy boundary-chord,  
And over our host enough of thine heavenward wonder  
Is echoing, that God and the Ages have still their  
word,

But Yonder . . . on fallow fields are the mists o'er-  
shrouded,  
And the well-springs go dark and unloved from  
source to sea,  
And the gleaming shrines of the mountain are dumb  
and shrouded,  
And our souls are like ghosts, for loss of the throb  
from thee!

## FROM THE STARS

*The low light on the horizon wakes,  
And where that boreal light is led  
In more than dream the impulse wakes  
To call to us the mystic dead.  
Then the ethereal, cosmic spark,  
Earth-charged, illumines that nameless Pole,  
That Garden of the freezing dark  
Where blooms the star-fruit of our soul.*

**E**ARTH-SOUL, the keys are strange. The notes  
Of thy dark mind seem blurred with pain.  
Even as the sunbeam drives the motes  
In vain against the wind, I am vain.  
My soul is filled with thine eddying breeze,  
With thy noise of the earth-sea; I am laid with its  
rhume.  
The subtler will is estrayed in thy maze.  
I grope like a soul in the darkling womb,  
. . . . On thine wavering dream-water a wraith I raise—  
It is ether-borne from the Martian tomb.

. . . . Yonder, afar, on an olden shore,  
Our period is done.

                    We strive no more  
Even with the cosmic powers, the laws  
Which wrought us of old.

                    They bid us pause  
Now, and unstring the æonian lyre  
Wherethrough our vesper was pour'd like fire:  
Though every battle of ancient dawn,  
Lost even as all was lost, is won  
In us, and every rose of pride  
And every maiden hope that died  
Lives like a crystal fill'd with flame

In star-dawn of yon far sphere's dream ;  
And we, whose dawn-flush'd brows are fann'd  
With airs from an impossible strand,  
Go on o'er homing tides, through spray,  
Wave-jubilant, of a starry way.

Earth-soul, believe! Our globe of dew,  
Rounded, gave back the heavenly light  
Of whorl on whorl our fathers knew,  
Who understood the scope of night.  
Cycles beneath their footsteps lay ;  
Age-filter'd knowledge, plunging dream  
For aenons fulfilled the Martian day  
Which fades, a taper in infinite gleam,  
Which fades, in sunrise on granary floors  
Where the awful winnowing of cosmic law  
Breathes its blast on the dying Martian shores.  
We are seed for that Sower . . .  
We are steeds for that Plow.

. . . . Revelation?

To thee it were *wings of lead*  
Or a bridge of mist over unplumb'd seas,  
Or such face as, in midnight unstarr'd and dead,  
Thy wandering dream-hour beholds and flees ;  
Or as vain as dawn-dew, elusive, seen  
In deserts by caravans athirst, astray ;  
Incredible as violets where ne'er hath been  
Dew, air or the burgeoning flush of day.

Only a vague, an assuring moral breath  
Can I bring, or any who speak through dream or death.  
Nothing that I may know is known as thou  
Yearnest for knowing ; and knowing, thou would'st not  
know.  
Thy years do bring such proof as thy brain doth crave



Of personal destiny to o'erlive the grave,  
But the Promise breath'd in the human heart of old  
Is as flying fire on thy verge till earth grow cold.

Still . . . .

Thou prayest of me  
What thou cravest of all  
Who are gone on that Sea  
Which thy creed maketh small,  
Which thy brain giveth form  
From thy pools left apart,  
Though they know not the storm  
Nor the hope of its heart,  
Though they know not the home-ways  
Nor the ships of that flood  
Nor the drift of its foam-ways  
Nor the thought of its God.

Earth-soul, *not* to breathe  
What thine own kindred gone  
Strive so vainly to wreath  
Through thy last dreams at dawn—  
Inconceivable plummet,  
Thought-shattering fires  
From the gulfs and the summits  
Of thine enfranchised sires  
Whom the Symbol hath drunken,  
Whom the True hath re-found  
When thy Real hath shrunken  
And thy silence grown Sound:

Though these mysteries press o'er thee  
Of thy journeying soul  
And the darkness before thee,  
I but speak of the Whole;

For with this thou art bound,  
And the way of thy Race,  
When all years are unwound,  
Thou shalt know face to face,  
On a positive Morrow,  
Impossible, uncreate,  
And more vast than thy crime or  
thy grace.

. . . Yet out of the deep of stars and the inner deep  
Has the Soul, full many a time of yesterday,  
Drawn thee-ward adown the zones of mist and sleep  
And breath'd vague parables of thy planet's way.  
Never, nor forever in all the days that lie  
In the unimagin'd future, could sage or god  
Reveal that Aïden whose blooms will pierce the sky  
When unto the end thou bear'st thy racial load.  
Even as the lone way of thy spirit's flight  
Exceeds all revelation and waits in veil  
On thy soul's desire when crack these walls of night,  
So is thy racial road and its Holy Grail.  
Fled is my vision and vain: I may but speak,  
Even of thy human race, words dark to thee.  
Thy race is as a seed in March winds bleak.  
How should it know that far millennial tree,  
Cedar of Lebanon, deep wild-apple bower  
Or vine of the trumpet or wheaten harvest dim?  
I can but say with passionate word,—the flower  
Is in thy seed, thine aching clod, thy rime!

. . . Haply even God knows not, or wills  
To know not, that which none save He,  
The o'erbrooding Deep where all tide stills,  
Can guess or dream, which waits in thee.  
Not that words fail or symbols break

Only, or that thou fail'st of might  
To peer where the milleniums slake  
Their thirst in founts of love and light,

But more,—that the undetermin'd goal,  
The unshap'd fane, the plan undream'd  
By any uncorporeate soul,  
In thee abides, by thee is deem'd,  
Hath clue or light or life to thee  
Alone; in all the heaven of stars  
Flames for thine only heart to see;  
In the atom-storms or galactic wars

Is thy flying ensign, wrought of thy soul,  
Flung on the immense, yet none may scan  
That banner, or seek that mystic goal,  
Save thee, blind, piteous, transcendent Man!  
Out of the sunset God's breath is blown;  
On Calvary the promise is seal'd in blood;  
But thou hear'st but a seaward cry, and none  
May precede on thy self-engender'd flood.

. . . . Fading, drawn downward through infinite wreath  
on wreath

Of mist, of memory not mine, and mystic blend  
Of soul with soul in labyrinths of dream and death,  
I am call'd to the secular labor that hath no end;  
And all that I take is a yearning of friend for friend,  
And all that I tell is the watchword thine own heart saith,  
And all I would leave by the watchfire thine heart  
doth tend

Is a lifeward urging, a more desiring faith;  
And to those who are wandering, one word out of  
heaven I send:

I, one Dominion of the multitude  
Who toil or who pause in Holy Rood  
And who see the Milky Way as a star  
In the vaster heaven of the Infinite Home,  
And the soul of Man more resplendent far  
Than all the heaven where his race doth roam :

O Man, though I cannot teach, I know  
You shall shape your lesson as you go.

O Man, there is none who *would* flash light  
From onward worlds into your night  
Wherethrough, by your own law, you climb  
On steps of night toward your Sublime.

Temper'd your soul ; yet where you move,  
On roads your human feet shall wend,  
Are subtle fires you dream not of  
Whose tempering purpose hath no end.

Living, ineffable it gleams,  
Your hope no victory can fulfill.  
Memory is not a wraith of dreams ;  
It is potent, central, indomitable :

Though far on tides no bark may sail  
For long milleniums, it may heave  
Its bird-wing or cloud-mountain pale,  
Through it the ultimate world doth live.

O Man, on a height more far, more strange  
Than the face of the moon's dead mountain-range,  
And ineffable as silvern or ruddy shore  
Of the dawn-star, thy cosmic fruit hath store,  
Yet it lies where thy looms make thunder, where crowd  
Thy social hosts in dissolving cloud.  
The Keeper of the Hoard—the God, the Whole,

Thou art glory in His eyes: thou art His goal,  
Yet he sundereth ne'er one skein of all  
The web that enwinds thee, King and Thrall!

To thee is thy way of virtue known,  
A fourth dimension, thine own alone.  
The terror, the brand, the weight, the flail  
Of consequence is thy billowing sail.

Though thou abhorr'st thine enemy,  
Blind soul, I can see truth in thee.  
Though infinite duties on thee press  
I do acclaim thy selfishness;  
And though, inveterately blind,  
Thou hatest truth, thou art a wind  
That fans it into life, to be  
Light on new shores that wait for thee.  
Thou art defeated, victor thou:

Thou buildest where thou breakest down,  
Thou nerverest whom thou strikes low,  
Thou can'st not flee thy mission.  
Yea, though thou bear'st them down, the young,  
The hopeful, and the hungering,  
They welcome thee who mak'st them strong,  
And thou art good in everything:

And even as thou to life art good,  
Or now, or in the years to be,  
So all the anguish of thy blood  
Mysteriously is good to thee.

Life's joy thou drinkest: know, O Soul,  
That all thy laughter, smiles of rest  
And passionate renderings, do control  
The arrow of life through boundless quest.

Darkness . . . .

Not mine, even thine the scroll.

Distance . . . .

The deeper Sound is nigh,

I am gone as where flaming waters roll . . . .

Voice of thy dreams am I.

I am in thee and of thee . . . .

Lo, thine the scroll . . . .

Yet I live and shall not die,

Where in Mystery,

In the blue on mountain-ranges of the waiting soul,

In the immanent wilderness, yielding yet virgin forever,

We are comrades of wandering. What uncreate Pole

Hath God's own unaccountable wandering, is whisper'd never

Save, alone—that the love all-human, and ineffable

Mystery of will, of memory, no death can sever.

Farewell!

## THE CONQUERER

**L**OVE, on a crag of time, with beating breast,  
With quivering wings, there glowing mystically  
In sudden light that lighten'd all the sea  
When life swung heavenward from ancestral rest—  
There in the hallow'd moment that is press'd  
'Gainst the dark heart while earth hath memory,  
Pois'd love. Ah Love, those lovers! Surely we,  
That far-off morning, guardian'd well that nest!

Love is gone now, down the undying west . . . .  
O'er solemn verge what vast wings lift and wane,  
There on the journeying deep's o'er-freighted crest,  
Through forests of the wandering wonder-rain,  
In rainbows on an ocean lov'd and blest?  
Plum'd as the sun—Love, Love—the Bird again!

## NIOBE

(A BRONZE HEAD BY PICASSO: CALLED "A BUST")

**O** BROTHERS and sisters, come ye and gaze  
with me.

She is dark and relentless and strange, and  
our Mother she.  
Dark and supreme and dim as a simoon-shade,  
She the Rememberer, the Keeper, the Womb which  
made!

Ah, the ages of groaning of immemorial slaves  
And the wasted Christs and the lands of remembering  
          graves,  
And the Brunos, and the myriads who go a famish'd way  
Since her first Immortal was born to our planet's day!

*She* is the Artist, robed in a thunder-tide,  
Who stands by our gates of modernity sunder'd wide  
And forgets not the sterner glories the ages owe  
And forgets not the bale nor the anguish of long ago.

She of the seed-time, under Attila's storm!  
She of the earth-thrust, formative through ruin'd form!  
She of despair, whose remorseless and onward gaze  
Hath impelled Despair as a hewer of untrod ways!

Shall our ocean-daybreak to vaporous glamor pass  
While this Mother remembers the dole and the dream  
          that was  
And the deeps of repayment our beauty, our life must hold  
And the art-hope not of perfume nor ease nor gold?

Oh, She of bitterness, remembering the fiery flail  
And the battle-mound and dungeon and torture-bale:  
No rose-way nor wine nor stringed music Her awful art,  
But the wheel of Ixion and the torn Promethian heart.



Lo, brothers! In bronzèd symbol the Mother-Soul!  
Her bond is a blood-bond, her indefinable dole  
Is the garnered pain of the baffled splendor of a world,  
A resolute Purpose more awful than lightning hurled,

Her chaos a dancing star, but her mournful dream  
Is as poignancy of a rainbow in moon-gleam,  
And her debt of forbidden fulfillment shall be paid  
Ere our earth be our home, ere our Human its goal  
hath made!

## A CHILD IN THE MORNING

**Y**OU are lit with a magic flame,  
A lightning in space and night,  
Yet you know not the font whence  
came

That splendor of life and light,

Where, brooding and gloaming, lay  
That soul of the aether-zone,  
The light of your melody,  
The spell of your undertone.

Child, and soul of my soul  
And comrade of morning ways,  
Here is a miracle  
And key of eternities:

That all your wave and its foam,  
Ineffable under the stars  
And wild with night under gloom  
And radiant with sunrise bars,

Your wave and its wonder-heart,  
Its passion that breaks the shore,  
Is an immemorial part  
Of the ocean forevermore:

For the sky sends down its breath  
And the wave leaps, lifted and blown,  
But the ocean is underneath—  
Its life is the ocean's own.

Ancient, older than day  
Is the glory laid over you.  
Young as your heart at play,  
Young as a globe of dew,

Young as the sunrise-flame  
On mountains of cloud or snow,  
Old as from whence it came—  
Oh Spirit, how should you know?

### CHRIST IN DREAM

**A**H, CHRIST! Who to my sleep last night came  
nigh,  
Risen from some earlier dream o'er-worn  
and gone,  
Like a breath exstatic from maiden raiments blown,  
Spray of spring rains on gray eternity  
Of inland hill-rocks, or land-bird's homing cry:  
Passionate, far, unmitigable, unknown,  
Thou Christ, Whose worlds, Whose ages are Thine  
own,  
God of the ice and flame whose breath am I:

Lo, Thou, arcturian Flower that wilt not die  
From this lone shore, lo, earnest Wizardry  
Of music poignant, awful, from the deep  
Of all wild waters: lo, where my bent oars ply  
In glamor and anguish and battle, still Thy sigh  
Is round me like some romance dreamed in sleep!

## ON READING JAMES MARTINEAU

**I**N THIS our deep of life uncompasséd,  
Heav'd by star-sway or drawn by magnet-poles,  
By trade-winds in a world-wide motion led,  
The waves of ages and creations roll.  
Deeds brave and far, waves of the ancient soul,  
Mark the long ocean-track remembered,  
Dim battle-ways where earnest worlds have bled,  
Dominion of wan goal on hopeless goal.

And all around, the ocean-paths are full  
With mournful men who deem one wave the sea.  
The illimitable movement purposeful  
Which knows no fixity nor futility,  
Whose infinite goal is here and beautiful,  
In whose deep Deed alone life's hope may be,  
Breathes wave on wave, resplendent, bountiful . . .  
That men may deem one wave Finality!

## THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

**T**HE dew, the star: these things can be  
Which in the long-enduring year  
Of childlike life's white prophecy  
Have reft our prudence and our fear.  
The sunken stream is living here  
Fed by far hills unagingly,  
Forgotten, myriad, faithful, near.  
Heed we the child, that these things be!

These things can be: these magic rays  
Of old-world dream-resplendencies  
Whose glamor of forgotten days  
Hath gone with Ys below the seas.  
Renew'd are Merlin's alchemies,  
And Camelot's lambent orioles blaze  
When childhood opes, with golden keys,  
Our prison to the magic rays.

Lo, they can be: the wildwood eyes  
Of lynx and wolf and lion and bear  
That watch the fire while it dies  
And Man Primordial is there  
Who thrills with passionate pulse the fair  
Frail breast, and lights the infant skies  
With hope and terror, everywhere  
That memory lives in childhood eyes.

Yes, they can be: these lordlier powers  
Of ultimate fealty, borne like shields  
Above this human race of ours  
On all its myriad battle-fields.  
In vain for aye, Philistia wields  
Its mace, its measure, while like flowers

The innumerable childhood yields,  
In hosts renew'd, these lordlier powers.

Ah, they can be: those shining tides  
Where none but sacred bark may go,  
Seen in a vision that abides  
Forever while earth's waters flow,  
Forever while earth's lilies blow  
And while that mystic hour betides  
Dream in its gift of youth may know,  
Now as of old, those star-drawn tides!

And they shall be! Youth of the World,  
Not evermore is laid the spell  
Whereunder is our banner furl'd  
And dry our ancient saintly well  
And dumb our ancient folk-mote bell.  
Evilly o'er our sleep is curl'd  
New smoke of wizardry chill and fell,  
But thou art Wizard of the World.

O mighty Wizard, Wonder-child,  
*Thou* hast thine old tempestuousness!  
O Eater of the honey wild  
And locust in the wilderness,  
Thyself the Life which comes to bless:  
Restore thy sword, thine undefil'd  
Life-passion, to us in world-distress,  
O faithful Child, O Wonder-child!

## THE BEATITUDE

**F**AR on the gloaming wold its wonder is known.  
Beauty, breaking the heart of the toilers here,  
And broken hope, and surcease from the lesser  
fear—

It is token of these, their light is that wanderer's own.

Ah, but cloud in the tremulous human sky,  
Cloud, in the infinite river bath'd with fire,  
Victorious over the gloaming, mystic Desire—  
Some mightier mercy hath bound thee infinitely,

Yea, even thee, to the service of the dark plain.  
From sunfire, from moon-way, down through tor-  
rential storm  
Thou art call'd as we where the deep Intentions  
swarm,  
And thy glory is below in a world of transfigur'd pain.

Far on the plains the departing thunder is loud . . .  
It is laden with dews to be shed on marches far;  
It is earth's own bloom, though fring'd with a silver star  
Where it moves in splendor, a fountain of fire and cloud!

## TO ISADORA DUNCAN

(IN SORROW—APRIL, 1913)

SUCH joy as winds would bring from past the grave  
None living, O Isadora, has brought as thou.  
Thou hast saved us, but thine own thou could'st  
not save.

Haply no soul is broken as thou art now.

Thou, like Ayesha, out of holier morn,  
Bathed in a pillar of flame no tongue hath told  
And over stairs by ageless dream unworn,  
Hast brought us life from very Fonts of Old,

And all thy fountain turns to agony now.  
Because through beateous will and love on wings  
Thou hast led us where eternal amaranths grow,  
Thou liest most crushed of trampled piteous things.

For this of all things else thy mission seemed  
When the breath of Grecian vistas breathed from thee—  
That life shall live even as life's heart hath dreamed,  
That even through love alone shall life be free,

And through deep passion shall beauty with destiny blend,  
And life is a harp, whereon are fingers laid  
From past Orion, whose passion hath no end.  
And now the Lightning of God its chord hath played!

O Isadora, we have no word for thee  
Who hast raised our eyes to the burning eagle on high  
Above the sunset and dawn on a mystic sea,  
Save only . . . It gleams, that Eagle against the sky!



## THE DARK WEAVER

(A PLURALISTIC UNIVERSE)

### I

**H**OW Mystery, at her dark and intricate loom,  
Weaves her unnumber'd, her unending  
threads:

Her shuttle bears our luminous golds and reds  
Of human life; it bears our skeins of gloom.  
The weaving of her shuttle is our doom,  
Or bright, or dark. But follow where it leads!  
Follow, regardless of our personal creeds,  
Till haply some vast tapestry shall bloom  
In glory on some wide and mighty wall,  
O'er subdued splendor of some echoing hall  
Where some grave Race shall tread a cloudy home;  
And on our visionary ear may fall  
Indeed the romance of the Weaver of All,  
The mystic One, risen from an outworn loom!

### II

The loom, the web, the Weaver! Not as this,  
An ultimate, all-considering, clear romance  
Woven of a Hand mystic and near, is ours.  
*Our wills* weave ceaselessly, gods of drift and chance.  
Sword-blades and gorgons twine our pattern'd  
flowers.  
A soul's web of the sphinx our life's web is.

In music and dew, how the enigmatical Sower  
Lays the dragon's teeth, prayerful in hallow'd hills.  
On the wild carton flame they, bitter and dark,  
Angels of consequence. The Sower spills  
Cold dust on icy headland or war-ways stark,  
And the shuttle gleams: lo, bloom of the tenderest flower!

There is no Motive, yet as One it gleams,  
And the gloom of all the weavers engendereth,  
Like a world-deep vineyard or haunt of tropic vine,  
The fruitage of all, the compelling and single Breath  
That on old woven battlefields falls like wine  
On parchéd lips, lives broken—vintage of dreams!

We weave in hope and passion the hookéd threads,  
Which need not be save that an Underbreath  
Guides each instinctive finger till it is done.  
We have woven our web and doom; nor ever death  
Retriev'd one skein or wrought our hope through one.  
We are weavers of chance, woven of the Breath that leads.

Oh beautiful is the web, the tapestry  
Of beauty of wells and heights and tears and stars;  
The web that hides no Answerer; where, untold,  
The weavers weave over the changeless bars  
Of utterless law, ageless and still and cold,  
The empurpl'd tapestry of the Conscript Free!

### III

O Child in the sunlight! You cried with lyric soul  
When the storming shadow, hawk-swift, mysteriously,  
Cast its portent along the vale, a wizardry  
Of mountain-terror, with whelming thunder-roll  
Beneath cumulous immensities upbuilded; and Earth  
was whole.  
Thy joy of the elemental seem'd wine to me.  
The enduring mountain was crown'd and illum'd  
with thee.  
In thy blood seem'd the rythm of all truth from pole  
to pole.

And there, in thy symbol, thy lightning—the Infinite  
Scroll!

The bewildering years, all arrivals of the journeying  
world,

All the ineludable, immanent pain, the toll

Whereof God hath no need yet His far lost dawn is  
impearl'd

With these irrecoverable sorrows; the resolute goal

Of all loves, all loss, one Tapestry, complete, un-  
furl'd . . . .

While thy pulse-beat of Pan, of Galahad, O Human  
Child,

Held in rythm God's dream and the mountains gloom-  
shot and wild!

## THE UTOPIAS OF WILLIAM MORRIS

(“HE NEVER SHOWS *HOW*.”—BIOGRAPHER)

**Y**ET the dawn is laboring there, and East is East,  
East is East, and the sunrise is winged with  
wonder.

Beyond the murk and the fell and the toil of the Beast  
Is the sunrise, boundless and blinding, plumed with  
thunder,

And the Tribe of the Titans gropes and is mean  
thereunder.

Then praise for the herald-singers, that they have  
ceased

Not ever, praise for the dreams that defy and sunder!

Utopias of the Past! Though they never were

More than may rose-trees bloom in the Alpineglow,  
Nor more than may thunder and elemental whirl

Of the star-worlds reside in the tremulous sheen below  
On the waters of night, here where the beech-boughs  
throw

Their enchantment—yet is all Watling-street astir,

And the fires of Icelandic heaven shine row on row!

Has he told the road, has he traced the defile that clings  
Round the ebon crag of the mountain, that plunges yon

Into gulfs of the eyeless morrow, the waste that brings  
No hero-wanderer to any Burg-Dale known—

Has he threaded the labyrinth of age-boundless stone?  
*Nay*,—Yet praise to the song-smith who cries the  
Mightier Things

And the singer who sings a destiny 'neath the sun!

He has risen, a Creator and Dreamer who dared to dream.

He has wrought in such glamor, by such a forge of old  
In the roots of the mountains, as o'er the ancestral stream

Of our father-races poured an ensanguined gold

Of hero-hopes that saga and creed have told.

He has wrought a sword of the ancient Odin-gleam,

And our eyes shall flash fire to it yet ere our Race  
be cold!

### JUNALUSKA VALLEY

**B**LUE is the wave under the unrisen moon.

Foam is pour'd on the silent crest, whence  
never

The wave is shed through rune on forgotten rune—

The wave of the titan mountains, uprear'd forever.

Blue is the wave's unmeasur'd wall. But gray

The enormous vale, fill'd with the mist of night,

Flooded and fann'd with the moon's eternal ray,

And the world is cold yet aflame with mysterious light.

## A MEMORY

(TO L. W. C.)

YOU remember, long ago, on a promontory,  
The prow of France, deep in the Atlantic's pil'd  
Empurpl'd and foam-laid wave, where the Channel  
in glory

Heav'd from the parent ocean, a Centaur-child,  
Or trimpl'd into ultimate ocean laden and hoary,  
Primal and deathless, moon-led, tenebrous, wild—  
How all day long, and through night, and till noon  
was mild

We dream'd, and were lost in wonder, in mystery and  
story.

For Finistère was behind, and its memories hover'd  
Like clouds or cloud-flocks of nameless birds in the sky,  
Even as the dream of Celtdom, though undiscover'd  
Forever, in the soul of man is a fluted cry  
Along haunted downs, memorial and unrecover'd  
Yet respir'd from the years unborn, not years that die.  
Brittany was behind; but all night, on high,  
On the brow of a wingèd Victory, Modernity uncover'd!

For the silent, immense and horizon-piercing power  
Of deliberate light from that lonely pinnacle flow'd,  
A pulsing foam on the wandering cloud-tower,  
A ghostly revealer where the sheeted schooners rode,  
An unresting marvel on the ocean's flood-tide hour  
When at profound midnight the awful cavalry stood  
Unmoving, and all Being was rapt, in air or flood,  
Save that blade-against-darkness of the never-wearying  
mower!

How could we tell, who do yet remember, the wonder  
Of that night, that day, wherein as leaves in the blast  
We were borne where rainbows were thriddled, where  
ocean's thunder

In the glowing receiving zenith seem'd a wind that  
pass'd  
Trancendly murmuring! The enormous crags were  
under,

And yet odorous frail-intimate flowers round our  
knees were cast.

Our souls were echoing fountains of a terrene past.  
The heart and the world seem'd welded past might to  
sunder.

Dawn came in splendor. But satiety, groping desire  
And baffled and drowning wings in too-tenuous air  
And dole of the moth confounded through thirst for fire  
And bitter weariness of finite souls, made sere,  
Unlovely, unheavenly, unanswering, the ruddy gyre  
Of illumined cloud, the unwearying world so fair  
Thro' whose dawn and darkness life of its life we wear.  
In such dole be a token for bewilder'd hearts, where  
they tire!

For our life, and our personal lives, since there rose  
from gloaming

The visitant, the indwelling Vision of Mystery  
With wings of flame in the shadowy spirit, homing  
In unaccountable ways, to the unheard cry  
Of the Veil'd Desirer—all our estrays, our becoming  
Approve that the Mood of Wonder may never die;  
That earnest Endurance is its wing in the whelming sky  
And long lone deserts of its migratory roaming!

All the defeat was o'ergrown, ere twilight had gilded  
The enchanting billows on a lowly shore where we  
came.

Day after day, year after year has builded

Unerringly, divinely, a home as of crystal and flame  
Whose unfearing walls by weariness are wrought and  
shielded,

Where bafflement and mystery are welcome guests  
at the dream,

Where creative memories like living passion do gleam  
Whose unaging impulsion a far sea-mountain yielded!



## THE LAW OF OLD

WHEN the winds of autumn descend on our  
valley  
And the glimmering presences sound in  
the trees,  
Lo! the thrilling note of their mystical rally  
Is a cry to our soul, grown one with these.

It lifts us afar to the purple ranges  
Where the hosts are adrift and the banners glow,  
Till even those weary in the bower'd granges  
Hear the portal sunder, the bugles blow.

No cycle of earth sees the Powers revel  
As then when the ice is on the crag,  
When the rains are nigh and the storms dishevel  
And reels to the sod the exstatic flag

And the hosts go wasted and singing nightward  
And the bugle dies in the echoless deep  
And the world's pulse wanes, which anon and lightward  
Shall climb from a death that is not sleep.

\* \* \* \* \*

When the winds of autumn descend on our valley  
And the deep Dominions, with iron breath  
Blown in the mighty movement, rally  
Solemn and sure by the gates of death,

Shall not the joy that from years unnumber'd  
Thrills over forest and field and height  
At dawn of the Dream of Change which slumber'd  
In bough and sky and in splendid night,

The joy that is hers, our own and our mother,  
When autumn's death is with gold aflame,  
Be ours, and the light of it, now while another  
September breathes the ineffable Name?

We are not more than the leaf, or glory  
Of clouds that forlorn and transient fold.  
We are not less than the world, the hoary  
Years, or the sacred Law of Old.

## DE PROFUNDIS

### A FRAGMENT

. . . . Where our passion  
Is wrought into music haunting the helpless mind,

Our life hath its flower ;  
Here, where our soul, fed upon hopeless dream,  
In a tragic hour,  
In dust and night, seeks the primeval stream.

Here is our meaning:  
It bides by the deep channels of our soul  
Where the fountains, raining  
In mystery holy and terrible, dumbly roll,

White and forever  
From deeps of bitter ecstasy and sweet tears,  
Their flood which never  
May know its home through all our possible years.

Our meaning lingers  
In brooding portent of sudden destiny  
Where they, the bringers  
Of burden and anguish and infinity

Breathe by our portal  
With brows of the angels and with sockets blind,  
With fierce immortal  
Music, with love, with thirst of the desert wind,

With flame's own being  
To sunder the adamant floor of this our home  
Till the spirit, fleeing,  
Seeks downward the buried founts of our life and doom.

But the mind that ponders,  
It knows not forever that poignant mystery,  
Nor the eye that wanders  
On landscapes vast and the brooding boundless sky,

Nor down the unmeasured  
And awful track of the ageless way of man  
Is the meaning treasured;  
Yet it clothes him and crowns the goal of the course  
he ran.

This is the meaning  
That our soul, which is God, in Whom the stars  
are sown,  
Like a cloud-king leaning  
Out o'er the gulf plumb'd by our love alone,

Knows and can utter  
Only in silent light on the inner sky  
Or in thunder's mutter  
When men and nations arise to dare and to die,

Our meaning transcendent  
When the foam of the Fountain crowns our brow at  
the goal—  
That we are defendent  
For that which no eye may behold while the planets  
roll;

That consecrated  
To a labor our mind may serve but may never know,  
We are doom'd, we are freighted  
With love, with splendor and terror of the fountain's  
flow;

That sorrow befalls us  
For this, that an Inconceivable may be;  
That a Herdsman calls us  
With voice on our desolate downs like the ancient sea:

He has laid on the meadows  
Of infinite time His print as on summer grass,  
And the worlds are shadows  
Limn'd upon morning mist as His couriers pass;

His footsteps are o'er us  
As on shadowy stairs in the royal East of old  
Pass'd the kings before us  
And we were Buddha and kings and stairs of gold . . .

And anew the yearning  
Is wrought into music haunting the helpless brain,  
On the way returning  
Downward forever, where the silent fountains rain !

## RAINDROPS ON CAMBRIAN SHALE

**T**HE shore its meed of driftwood bears.  
 The ancient cliffs their vigil keep.  
 On sands more ancient than all years  
 Murmurs the homeless wandering deep.  
 And here on immemorial stone,  
 Where fell the cambrian rains of yore  
 Through rainbows in far worlds forgone,  
 Your memory keeps its ageless hour.

Far and away the deeps were laid  
 Where hung the storm-soul cloud on cloud,  
 And all the ocean, thunder-stay'd,  
 In calm wide fields no besom plough'd,  
 Yearn'd for the revelation's breath.  
 And swift and drop by drop they came,  
 The leaves from out the thunder-wreath  
 Of primal sunfire, shot with flame  
 Of sunrise no man's eye hath seen,  
 In dawn more ancient than all age.  
 Then the storm fell.  
 O Rainbow-sheen,  
 You carv'd our planet's eldest page!

By the same writer:

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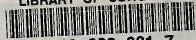








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